

# EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

## *Pulaski County, AR*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected Pulaski County for a Brownfields Pilot. Pulaski County was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at Brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. This Pilot is targeting areas in two cities located in Pulaski County—Little Rock and North Little Rock. Little Rock and its sister city, North Little Rock, were settled in the early 1800s on opposite banks of the Arkansas River. Transportation, commerce, and industry began on and grew inland from the riverbanks. Like most American cities after World War II, central Arkansas sprawled into suburban greenfields and began the abandonment of its historical urban core. The cities face several obstacles in redeveloping the urban core. Both Little Rock and North Little Rock are currently undergoing downtown/river area redevelopment, the extent of which has not yet been fully realized. The unknown nature of brownfields locations and liabilities is a major deterrent to urban core redevelopment.

### OBJECTIVES

The Pilot plans to use funding to survey the target area in order to provide private developers and public agencies with a complete data set on development

### PILOT SNAPSHOT **Date of Announcement:** May 2000



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**Amount:** \$200,000  
**Greenspace:** \$50,000

**Profile:** The Pilot plans to use funding to identify sites, perform environmental assessments, and develop appropriate cleanup and redevelopment plans for the targeted areas of Pulaski County. The Pilot also plans to use additional greenspace funding to develop an integrated park/recreational system along the riverfront of the Arkansas River.

#### **Contacts:**

Metroplan  
Little Rock, Arkansas  
(501) 340-8305

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 6  
(214) 665-6736

Visit the EPA Region 6 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6sf/bfpages/sfbfhome.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

sites. The Pilot also plans to coordinate long-term municipal redevelopment plans with the brownfields data. The number of sites to be formally assessed will be narrowed based on current and historic uses of the property and restrictions on redevelopment. Once the sites are narrowed, environmental assessments will be conducted.

The additional greenspace funding will assist in plans for an integrated park/recreational system that connects both city centers to the library. The selected greenspace “focus area” falls approximately in the center of the targeted Urban Core Redevelopment area. Conceptual development plans include a botanical garden, esplanades and overlooks along both sides of the Arkansas River, a marina, a boat launch, a proposed Central Arkansas Aquarium and entertainment center, and further development of the existing Riverfront Parks on either side of the river. The two city parks will be joined by the abandoned Rock Island Rail bridge, which will be converted into a pedestrian pathway.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Identifying and inventorying potential brownfields properties within the primary target area;
- Conducting assessments on the Old Veterans Administration Hospital, the Library Redevelopment Area, Vestal Property, and 13<sup>th</sup> Street Park sites;
- Involving the community in brownfield assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment planning efforts;
- Maintaining a brownfields database for the target area; and
- Incorporating redevelopment plans into land use, zoning, and parks master plans for the target area and remote sites.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*